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ABSTRACT

This paper specifies the assessment of those writing skills needed by first through sixth grade students to produce specific discourse products, including descriptive writing, narrative writing, expository writing, persuasive writing, poetry, personal letters, and business letters. An introductory section provides background materials, including explanations of how the skill specifications were selected and how they are presented in this report. In the sections that follow the introduction, the general discourse skills are discussed, a table listing the language skills is presented, and the specifications are described for each skill. Each skill is described in detail, followed by the presentation of sample assessment items and descriptions of how these items are constructed. (Four related documents provide assessment specifications for other writing skills, including mechanics, language usage, spelling, and general discourse.) (RL)

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SPECIFICATIONS FOR 1-6 WRITING SKILLS ASSESSMENT
PART V: DISCOURSE PRODUCTS

Ann Humes, Bruce Cronnell, Joseph Lawlor, Larry Gentry, Caroline Fieker

ABSTRACT

This paper specifies the assessment of those Discourse Products skills that are needed for effective writing. (Other writing skills are specified for assessment in separate documents: Mechanics, Spelling, Language, and General Discourse.) Each skill is described; then sample assessment items are presented, followed by descriptions of how these items are constructed.

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SPECIFICATIONS FOR 1-6 WRITING SKILLS ASSESSMENT
PART V: DISCOURSE PRODUCTS

Ann Humes, Bruce Cronnell, Joseph Lawlor, Larry Gentry, Caroline Fieker

A Language Skills Framework was provided for a project that had as its purpose the task of indicating language competencies in the English classroom, grades 1-6. These competencies are the criteria on which appropriate assessments can be based. One of the components of the framework is writing.

This paper describes the Discourse Products skills of the framework, as well as the appropriate assessments for the skills. In the first section of this paper, the writing skills specifications are generally described as background. Then the specifications for the Discourse Products skills are presented.

BACKGROUND

To determine the essential writing skills, the literature was searched to identify skills that are proposed as significant by language arts authorities and by state and local competency lists. Data on the instruction in students' language arts textbooks were also analyzed for skills. A comprehensive list of skills was thus compiled and then revised to retain those skills most important for success in current school instructional programs. Thus these skills reflect writing instruction as it is, not necessarily as it should be.

Grade levels were then specified for these skills according to the level of textbook presentation, and the skills were categorized by content into a framework of writing skills. For a detailed discussion of these procedures, see Humes (1979).

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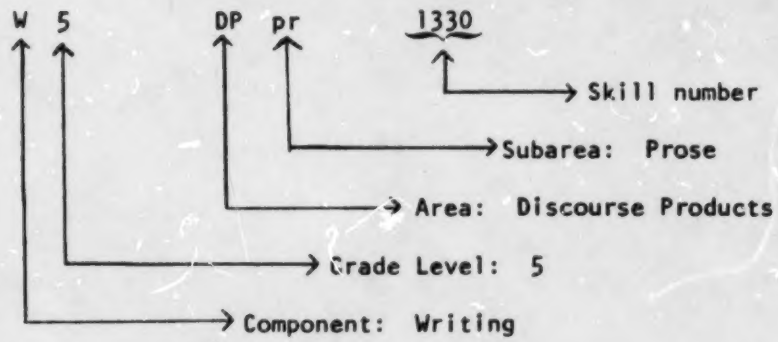
After the skills were categorized, specifications for their assessment were developed. These detailed skills specifications provide suggested information to enable others to identify each skill or to develop appropriate assessment items. The skill specifications are primarily based on analyses of several textbook series currently used in elementary schools. This approach ensures a correspondence between assessment and instruction.

Skill specifications consist of a Code Number, a Skill Statement, a Skill Description, and an Assessment description that includes both Sample Items and an Item Description.

Code Numbers

The coding system was devised to allow rapid identification of each skill. The following example illustrates the system of individual skill numbers:



As is evident from the example above, the first symbol in a code is the letter "W," which indicates the component--Writing. The next symbol, a number, indicates the grade level. Following the grade level are letters indicating the area (capital letters) and subarea (lower-case letters) of the skill. The specific skill is indicated by a four-digit code,

hierarchically divided. The left digit defines a skill. This digit may be followed by three zeros or may contain digits describing the subordinate nature of the skill (e.g., skill 1300 is a subskill of skill 1000, and skill 1330 is subsumed under skill 1300).

In addition to the Discourse Products covered by Part V, skills in other areas, which are sometimes referenced in Part V, are coded as follows:

Part I: Mechanics--coded M

Part II: Spelling--coded S

Part III: Language--coded L

Part IV: General Discourse--coded GD

Skill Statements and Skill Descriptions

Each Skill Statement briefly specifies the coded skill, and the Skill Description notes factors involved in the use of each skill, including other inherent skills and prerequisite knowledge. Insofar as possible, the Skill Descriptions are written in non-technical language so that they may be understood by the general reader; however, some basic technical terminology is used to ensure accuracy in the descriptions.

Assessment Descriptions

Each Assessment description includes a Sample Item and an Item Description. These items reflect the actual requirements of each skill. Furthermore, the items are constructed-response items, because they are the most appropriate type for the skill to be assessed. For additional information on writing appropriate assessment items, see Humes (forthcoming and 1980).

Items should assess ability fairly; they should not trick students. Correspondingly, specific directions are painstakingly written for the items so that students can understand precisely what they are to do. Furthermore, examiners are expected to provide necessary assistance during administration of the items so that students' understanding of a task is increased; however, examiners must also avoid giving clues to the answers. Another caution pertains to the items themselves: Most of the items have never been used with students; therefore, they should be piloted at the specified grade levels.

A description of the item accompanies each sample item. The Item Description details the exact procedures for completing each item and the construction of additional similar items. The description also notes any other important considerations relevant to assessing the skill with the sample-item format.

The vocabulary used in the sample items (including directions) is that documented for the Harris and Jacobson (1972) core vocabulary for reading from the preprimer level through grade 5. Since technical terms are generally not included in readers but are often needed for item directions, words are also used from the Harris and Jacobson content list for English (p. 106) and from the student terms in Cronnell (1979). In addition, since Harris and Jacobson eliminated proper nouns, a list of names was compiled, based on occurrence in at least two out of four commonly used elementary school reading programs. When other proper nouns are required for specific skills (e.g., addresses in letter writing), those used are ones considered most familiar to students.

Harris and Jacobson (1972) commonly strip words of various suffixes; therefore, unlisted forms of words are used according to the following grade-level schedule:

Grade 1: -s

Grade 2: -es, -ed, -ing (preferrably without spelling changes until grade 3); compounds of listed words

Grade 3: -er, -est, -ly, -y

Grade 4: contractions, possessives

Grade 5: un-

All of the previously mentioned word lists indicate the grade level at which the words can be read by most students. The words used in the sample items appear at earlier grade levels; e.g., grade 4 skills are written in words appearing on the list no later than grade 3. This criterion helps ensure that reading ability does not interfere with writing performance. Sometimes it is necessary to use words not available at the grade level of the skill. Such words are identified in the assessment descriptions and should be read to the students.

Sample items have been written to avoid language (connotative or denotative) and stereotypes that may offend individuals or groups. In particular, special attention has been given to avoiding sexism, racism, ageism, and other negative images, such as violence and excessively aggressive behavior.

In the section that follows, Discourse Products skills are discussed, a table listing the skills is presented, and the specifications are described for each skill.

DISCOURSE PRODUCTS

The result of the composing process is an actual discourse product--a composition, a story, a theme, an essay, a poem. The products may be of various lengths, ranging from a paragraph/stanza to a book, although only shorter forms--usually one to five paragraphs--are required at the elementary level.

Textbooks cover a wide variety of discourse products; see Figure 1 for an enumeration of various specific written forms (genres) commonly found in textbooks. These specific forms have been generalized; e.g., the expository form "Explanations" covers such tasks as "Explain how to do/make something," "Explain how something works," etc.

Obviously, so many specific written forms cannot be assessed efficiently. Moreover, assessment problems are posed by the considerable variation in the appearance of these forms across textbooks because each specific form has certain literary characteristics as critical attributes. For instance, fables, fairy tales, myths, legends, and tall tales all involve some kind of contrary-to-fact content, yet each specific form has its own unique requirements for production (e.g., fables generally have morals; elementary-textbook myths commonly involve gods and goddesses).

Thus assessing such specific written forms requires assessing student knowledge of literary characteristics unique to each product type. If the textbooks that are used in the classroom do not present that product, students cannot be expected to know its literary characteristics. Furthermore, it is questionable whether such knowledge, despite its value, should be evidenced by students as an indication of their writing ability, since writers who are otherwise competent may be unfamiliar with specific literary characteristics.

For the reasons above, the product skills included here have been generalized to eliminate the need to assess knowledge of the critical literary attributes of any specific form. Rather, assessment is provided for skills critical to all forms of the particular discourse type (e.g., the narrative-writing skills used to produce all the previously referenced narrative forms--fables, fairy tales, myths, legends, and tall tales--are assessed for the skill "Writes a climactic narrative"). Over fifty specific forms have been collapsed into nine general skills, which are also shown in Figure 1.

Additionally, assessment of these generalized skills provides the opportunity for assessing students' actual writing ability because writing samples are elicited--actual compositions written by students. Each writing sample assesses (1) the content skills of the discourse type, (2) content skills that apply across discourse types (General Discourse Skills), and (3) form skills that must be used to compose a quality product. Thus the discourse products assessed by the writing samples provide a general description of students' writing ability, while the skills in the other areas of the LSF provide more detailed information on student abilities with specific aspects of writing.

The skills for producing Discourse Products are divided into two subareas, Prose and Poetry:

> Prose. Prose discourse products include compositions in the four traditional discourse modes: description, narration, (subdivided into straightline and climactic narration), exposition, and persuasion. Although these modes correspond to

Figure 1. Specific written forms assessed by Discourse Products

Thank-you notes (content, not format)	Writes a description.
Descriptive journals	
Riddles	
Character sketches	
Descriptive essays	
Personal letters (descriptive content, not format)	
Miscellaneous short descriptions	
Personal narratives	Writes a straightline narrative.
Biographies	
Autobiographies	
Historical accounts	
Personal letters (narrative content, not format)	
Miscellaneous short narratives (straightline)	
Adventure stories	Writes a short climactic narrative.
Science fiction	
Fables	
Fairy tales	
Animal tales	
Myths	
Legends	
Tall Tales	
Plays	
Miscellaneous short stories (climactic)	
Comparisons/Contrasts	Writes an expository composition.
Explanations	
Analyses	
Informative book reports	
Record-keeping journals (content, not format)	
Business letters (expository content, not format)	
Letters to editor (content, not format)	Writes a persuasive composition.
Editorials	
Critical book reviews	
Media reviews	
Newspaper advertisements	
Radio/television commercials	
Persuasive essays	
Notices (content, not format)	Writes an invitation in the form of a personal letter.
Announcements (content, not format)	
Invitations	
Telephone messages (content, not format)	
Newspaper stories (content, not format)	
Personal letters (format, not content)	
Letters to editor (format, not content)	Writes a business letter.
Business letters	
Odes	Writes a short descriptive poem.
Pastorals	
Occasional verse	
Haiku (content, not form)	
Cinquain (content, not form)	
Light verse (descriptive content)	
Limericks (for descriptive elements)	
Miscellaneous descriptive poems	
Ballads	Writes a short narrative poem.
Short epics	
Limericks (for narrative elements)	
Miscellaneous narrative poems	

Note: The specific written forms (on the left) are those commonly found in instruction; the generalized Discourse Products (on the right) are included in the LSF. The skills required for these products are listed and described in the skills specifications.

Kinneavy's* division of modes into descriptive, narrative, classificatory, and evaluative discourse, traditional labels are used because they are more familiar to practitioners. Prose discourse products also include two letter-writing skills (personal and business letters), which have format characteristics as critical attributes.

Poetry. A number of different specific poetry products are frequently included in elementary instruction; however, the generalized skills that can be assessed for those component skills common to all such products can be subsumed under the categories of descriptive and narrative poetry. Poetry products are difficult to assess appropriately without an instructional context. However, items are described so that resources for specifying a complete assessment instrument are included.

The table that precedes the skill specifications lists all the product skills in this category.

A highly structured stimulus is provided for each item that assesses a product skill. This stimulus facilitates easy scoring because it is always accompanied by scoring criteria that pertain specifically to that stimulus. The important content skills that are assessed for the specific writing task are enumerated in the Skill Description. However, to complete the product, a student must employ a number of other content skills as well

*Modes here should not be confused with Kinneavy's "aims" of discourse, which are classifications that parallel the communication triangle and may incorporate more than one mode in a whole product.

as form skills that are appropriate for the grade level of the sample. When these skills are employed in student writing, they implement the characteristics on which the writing sample is evaluated in the scoring key.

The skills array of the scoring key's matrix consists of these features of good writing that the sample exhibits when a student employs the content and form skills appropriate for both the specific writing task and the grade level of assessment.

The skills are ordered to facilitate scoring. Thus, for example, "Writes a title" would appear as the first content skill, where relevant, since the presence/absence of a title is immediately evident.

Performance ratings of good, acceptable, or unacceptable are given on each criterion in accordance with the rating considerations that the scoring guide describes. Thus the scoring key elicits considerable diagnostic information about individually listed component skills. It can also provide a total score for the writing sample when numerical equivalents are assigned to the good/acceptable/unacceptable ratings of the content and form skills and these individual scores are tallied. The numerical equivalents to be assigned to the good/acceptable/unacceptable are not prescribed; this policy allows users of the scoring system to assign weighted values that correspond to the importance of the skills for the population to be assessed.

A scoring guide accompanies the stimulus and scoring key. It describes the features that constitute a good, acceptable, or unacceptable score on each criterion in the scoring key. The skills corresponding to each criterion are listed by framework number within the brackets that follow the criterion statement. These guidelines are simple to interpret and use because they correspond to the precise individual features that implement

a good writing sample for the specific task rather than to an abstraction of "good writing in general."

Scoring is further simplified by a range that spans three broad rating categories. Although authorities differ over the number of ratings a scoring range should span, they generally agree that the fewer the possible rankings, the simpler the scoring. However, dichotomous scales tend to place a disproportionate number of students into the unacceptable range. Correspondingly, four-point scales tend to force students away from the middle (ETS, 1976). In a five-point scale, a rating of five represents a "rarity of success" (Lloyd-Jones, 1977, p. 50) and compounds the information process required of the scorer--a scoring key with ten content/skill categories and a span of five ratings requires 50 discriminations. For a complete discussion of the writing-sample assessment system in comparison to other widely used systems, see Humes (1980).

Each writing-sample stimulus--both the sample items here and any subsequently constructed items--and its concomitant scoring key and guide should be piloted before it is used for competency testing. This precautionary measure will reveal any elements that need clarification for either students or examinees.

DISCOURSE PRODUCTS (DP)		Grade level for assessment					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
Prose* (pr)							
1000	Writes a description			■	■	■	
2000	Writes a straightline narrative.		■	■			
3000	Writes a short climactic narrative.				■	■	
4000	Writes an expository composition.				■	■	■
5000	Writes a persuasive composition.						■
6000	Writes an invitation in the form of a personal letter.			■			
7000	Writes a business letter.						■
Poetry (po)							
1000	Writes a short descriptive poem.				■		
2000	Writes a short narrative poem.					■	

*Grade level differences for skills listed at more than one level are reflected in the subskills, stimulus, and scoring of the writing sample.

Skill: W3 DPpr 1000

Skill Statement

Writes a description.

Skill Description

The student writes a one-paragraph description. Three important descriptive-writing skills are component skills for this task at this grade level:

Skill W3 GDe 2100: Elaborates for descriptive writing: includes appropriate descriptive attributes.

Skill W3 Ld 1000: Uses specific rather than general terms (descriptive writing).

Skill W3 Ld 4000: Uses sensory terms.

See these individual skills for their descriptions.

Assessment

Sample Item

Directions: Write a paragraph that tells someone who has never eaten a hot dog about the one that is cooking over the fire in the picture.

[Picture: hot dog over outdoor fire, which is smoking.]

- Tell about the sounds you hear while the hot dog is cooking.
- Tell what you can smell while it is cooking over the fire.
- Tell how the hot dog looks.
- Tell how the hot dog tastes.

Comment: The words paragraph and taste may not be in students' reading vocabularies at this grade level.

Item Description

Using descriptive-writing skills, the student writes the paragraph elicited by the stimulus. The stimulus involves an object

W3 DPpr 1000 (continued)

that readily evokes familiar sensory impressions. Food thus makes a good object because it elicits all or most of the imagery types. However, other objects can be used if they strongly evoke two or more of the senses. In this case, additional objects may be used as stimuli in order to accommodate all five senses unless fewer senses are to be assessed. When several objects are used as descriptive stimuli, sequential rather than simultaneous presentation is preferrable.

Tactile imagery is not specifically elicited by the sample stimulus because students are likely to focus only on the hot dog's temperature rather than on its surface texture.

The object(s) incorporated in the stimulus must not be complex because assessment for writing description at this grade level can be implemented by a stimulus with a simple object. For example, a picture of a complex scene would require students to use repeatedly the same descriptive skills to write about each important object/ feature of the picture.

The "tell" statements in the stimulus provide prompts that constrain students' writing (1) to assure that students write the appropriate kind of paragraph--so they don't relate an account of outdoor cooking, (2) to facilitate using the same pertinent and valid scoring criteria for all students writing the paragraph, (3) to encourage an order in the description.

Scoring Key

Scoring Criteria	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
CONTENT:			
Describes the sounds heard while the hot dog is cooking.	___	___	___
Describes odors/ fragrances evident while the hot dog is cooking.	___	___	___
Describes how the hot dog looks.	___	___	___
Describes how the hot dog tastes.	___	___	___

Comment: The first four content criteria of the scoring key are combined in the scoring guide because the guidelines for rating are the same for each criterion.

W3 DPpr 1000 (continued)

Scoring Criteria	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
FORM:			
Indents the first word of the paragraph.	___		___
Uses margins.	___	___	___
Capitalizes the first word of sentences.	___	___	___
Includes periods at the end of sentences.	___	___	___
Spells correctly	___	___	___
Writes legibly.	___	___	___

Comment: The "Indents first word" criterion has only good and unacceptable ratings because a student either does or does not indent.

Scoring Guide

CONTENT:

Describes how the hot dog sounds, smells, looks, and tastes. [Skills W3 GDe 2100, W3 Ld 1000, W3 Ld 4000]

Good: The hot dog is described with some exact sensory words (e.g., the surface of the hot dog is described as "burnt").

Acceptable: The hot dog is described with general words (e.g., the surface of the hot dog is described as "different").

Unacceptable: Attributes are not described.

FORM:

Indents the first word of the paragraph. [Skill W2 Mfs 1000]

Good: The first word of the paragraph is indented.

Unacceptable: The first word of the paragraph is not indented.

W3 DPpr 1000 (continued)

Uses margins. [Skill W2 Mfs 2000]

Good: Margins are evident on both sides of the paper.

Acceptable: A margin is evident for one side of the paper.

Unacceptable: No margins are evident.

Capitalizes the first word of sentences. [Skill W2 Mc 2000]

Good: All or most sentences are capitalized.

Acceptable: Some sentences are capitalized.

Unacceptable: Few or no sentences are capitalized.

Includes periods at the end of sentences. [Skill W2 Mp 1100]

Good: All or most sentences end with periods.

Acceptable: Some sentences end with periods.

Unacceptable: Few or no sentences end with periods (or with other correct punctuation).

Spells correctly. [Skills W1 Sc 1110, 1310; W2 Sc 1320, 2100, 2200, 3000; W1 Sv 1100; W2 Sv 1200, 2100, 3100; W3 Sv 4100]

Good: All or most words are correctly spelled.

Acceptable: Several different words are misspelled.

Unacceptable: Many different words are misspelled.

Comment: The ratings refer to "different words" because many instances of misspelling the same word should be evaluated as one misspelled word.

Writes legibly. [Skill W2 Hmf 5000]

Good: All words are readable.

Acceptable: Most words are readable, and unreadable words do not interfere with comprehension of content.

Unacceptable: Many words are unreadable so that content is difficult or impossible to read.

Skill: W4 DPpr 1000

Skill Statement

Writes a description.

Skill Description

The student writes a description that is more than one paragraph long. Three important descriptive-writing skills are component skills for this task at this grade level:

Skill W3 GDe 2100: Elaborates for descriptive writing: includes appropriate descriptive attributes.

Skill W3 Ld 1000: Uses specific rather than general terms (descriptive writing).

Skill W3 Ld 4000: Uses sensory terms.

See these individual skills for their descriptions. They are first listed for assessment at the third grade level. Grade-level differences for these skills are reflected in the stimulus for and the scoring of the writing sample.

Assessment

Sample Item

Directions: Write a description of the animals in the picture. Use exact words so that someone who has not seen the picture can tell what the animals are like.

[Picture: a stylized elephant smelling a bouquet of roses and a stylized porcupine eating an ice cream cone.]

Begin your first paragraph with a sentence that tells what things are in the picture. Then write in that paragraph a description of the elephant and the flowers:

- Tell how the elephant and the flowers look.
- Tell how the flowers smell to the elephant.

Then write one paragraph that describes the porcupine and the ice cream:

- Tell how the porcupine looks.
- Tell how the porcupine would feel if you touched him.
- Tell how the ice cream tastes to the porcupine.

W4 DPpr 1000 (continued)

Item Description

Using descriptive-writing skills, the student writes the paragraphs elicited by the stimulus. The stimulus involves objects that readily evoke sensory impressions. The combination of food, flowers, and animals stimulates a variety of sense impressions. However, the objects incorporated in the stimulus must not be complex. This description can be further simplified by using only one of the animals as the stimulus.

The "tell" statements in the stimulus provide prompts that constrain students' writing (1) to assure that students write the appropriate kind of paragraphs--so they don't compose a narrative, (2) to facilitate using the same pertinent and valid scoring criteria for all students writing the paragraph, and (3) to encourage an order in the description.

Scoring Criteria	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
CONTENT:			
Writes an introductory sentence.	___	___	___
Describes appearance.	___	___	___
Describes fragrance.	___	___	___
Describes touch.	___	___	___
Describes taste.	___	___	___
Writes about each animal in separate paragraphs.	___	___	___

Comment: The second through the fifth content criteria of the scoring key are combined in the scoring guide because the guidelines for rating are the same for each criterion.

FORM:			
Uses correct grammar and complete sentences.	___	___	___
Punctuates and capitalizes correctly.	___	___	___
Spells correctly.	___	___	___
Writes legibly, with appropriate margins and indentation.	___	___	___

Scoring Guide

CONTENT:

Writes an introductory sentence. [Skill W4 GDe 1130]

Good: The first sentence refers to the elephant and porcupine. It may also refer to the flowers and the ice cream.

Acceptable: The first sentence is a beginning statement of some kind.

Unacceptable: No introductory sentence is included.

Describes appearance, fragrance, touch, taste. [Skills W4 GDe 2100; W3 Ld 1000 and 4000]

Good: Appropriate attributes are described with some exact sensory words; (e.g., the way the porcupine feels is described as "sharp").

Acceptable: Attributes are described with general words (e.g., the way the porcupine feels is described as "funny").

Unacceptable: Attributes are not described.

Writes about each animal in separate paragraphs. [Skill W4 GDe 1120]

Good: One paragraph tells about the elephant and the other tells about the porcupine.

Acceptable: Each paragraph generally tells about one of the animals, but references to the other animal are also included.

Unacceptable: No relationship of animal/paragraph is apparent.

FORM:

Uses correct grammar and complete sentences. [Skills W4 Lu 4100; W3 Lu 7100; W2 Lsp 1100]

Good: The composition has few or no grammatical errors and all sentences are complete.

Acceptable: The composition has some grammatical errors and most sentences are complete.

Unacceptable: The composition has many grammatical errors and many sentences are fragments and/or run-ons.

W4 DPpr 1000 (continued)

Punctuates and capitalizes correctly. [Skills W2 Mc 2000, W2 Mp 1100]

Good: The composition has few or no errors.

Acceptable: The composition has some errors.

Unacceptable: The composition has many errors.

Spells correctly. [Skills W1 Sc 1110, 1310, W2 Sc 1320, 2000, 3000; W1 Sv 1100; W2 Sv 1200, 2100, 3100; W3 Sv 4100; W4 Sv 4200; W4 Sm 1000]

Good: Most words are correctly spelled.

Acceptable: Several different words are misspelled.

Unacceptable: Many different words are misspelled.

Comment: The ratings refer to "different words" because many instances of misspelling the same word should be evaluated as one misspelled word.

Writes legibly, with appropriate margins and indentation. [Skills W4 Hcf 4000, W2 Mfs 1000, W2 Mfs 2000]

Good: The composition has few or no exceptions to the criterion.

Acceptable: The composition has some exceptions to the criterion.

Unacceptable: The composition has many exceptions to the criterion.

Skill: W5 DPpr 1000

Skill Statement

Writes a description.

Skill Description

The student writes a description that is two or more paragraphs long. Five important descriptive-writing skills are component skills for this task at this grade level:

Skill W3 GDe 2100: Elaborates for descriptive writing: includes appropriate descriptive attributes.

Skill W3 Ld 1000: Uses specific rather than general terms (descriptive writing).

Skill W3 Ld 4000: Uses sensory terms.

Skill W5 Lt 1200: Uses transitional expressions to link sentences: spatial expressions.

Skill W5 GDpo 6000: Uses spatial order.

See these individual skills for their descriptions. Scoring of these skills, and of the form skills, as well as the use of transitional expressions and spatial order, differentiate this descriptive writing task from that specified for fourth grade.

Assessment

Sample Item

Directions: Describe the food in the picture. Use exact words so that someone who has not seen this food can tell exactly what it is like.

[Picture: close-up view of a hamburger and a dish of pudding; the top bun of the hamburger is removed so that the bottom bun, the meat, a piece of lettuce, and a tomato slice are visible (from bottom to top); the pudding is in a glass dish so that whipped cream and a cherry (on top) are visible.]

Write one paragraph about the hamburger:

- Tell how the hamburger looks. Tell about all the things that are on the hamburger. Tell about these things in the same order as they are in the picture.
- Tell how the hamburger smells.
- Tell how the hamburger would taste if you ate it.

Write one paragraph about the pudding:

- Tell how the pudding looks. Tell about the things that are on the pudding. Tell about these things in the same order as they are in the picture.
- Tell how the pudding would <u>feel</u> inside your mouth if you ate it.
- Tell how the pudding would <u>taste</u> if you ate it.

<u>Item Description</u>

Using descriptive-writing skills, the student writes the paragraphs elicited by the stimulus. The stimulus involves objects that readily evoke sensory impressions. Moreover, the objects are composed of constituent parts (e.g., the cherry on the pudding) so that spatial ordering is elicited.

The "tell" statements in the stimulus provide prompts that constrain students' writing (1) to assure that students write the appropriate kind of paragraphs--so they don't compose a narrative, (2) to facilitate using the same pertinent and valid scoring criteria for all students writing the paragraphs, and (3) to encourage a spatial order in the description.

<u>Scoring Key</u>

<u>Scoring Criteria</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Acceptable</u>	<u>Unacceptable</u>
CONTENT:			
Describes appearance.	___	___	___
Describes aroma.	___	___	___
Describes texture.	___	___	___
Describes taste.	___	___	___
Uses spatial order.	___	___	___
Uses spatial expressions.	___	___	___
Writes about each food in a separate paragraph.	___	___	___

FORM:

Uses correct grammar and complete sentences.	___	___	___
Punctuates and capitalizes correctly.	___	___	___
Spells correctly.	___	___	___
Writes legibly, with appropriate margins and indentation.	___	___	___

Scoring Guide

CONTENT:

Describes appearance (i.e., hamburger bun, meat, lettuce, tomato; pudding, whipped cream, cherry). [Skills W3 GDe 2100; W3 Ld 1000 and 4000]

Good: All or most parts of each food are described with some exact sensory words (e.g., "a slice of fresh red tomato").

Acceptable: Most parts of each food are described with general words (e.g., "a piece of tomato").

Unacceptable: Most parts of each food are not described.

Describes aroma. [Skills W3 GDe 2100; W3 Ld 1000 and 4000]

Good: The hamburger's aroma is described with some exact sensory words (e.g., "smoky").

Acceptable: The hamburger's aroma is described with general words (e.g., "good").

Unacceptable: The hamburger's aroma is not described.

Describes texture. [Skills W3 GDe 2100; W3 Ld 1000 and 4000]

Good: The pudding's texture is described with some exact sensory words (e.g., "creamy").

Acceptable: The pudding's texture is described with general words (e.g., "funny").

Unacceptable: The pudding's texture is not described.

Describes taste. [Skills W3 GDe 2100; W3 Ld 1000 and 4000]

Good: The taste of each food is described with some exact sensory words (e.g., "meaty").

Acceptable: The taste of each food is described with general words (e.g., "good").

Unacceptable: The taste of the food is not described.

Uses spatial order. [Skill W5 GDpo 6000]

Good: Consistent spatial order is used (i.e., bottom-to-top or top-to-bottom orientation is maintained throughout).

Acceptable: Spatial order is evident but inconsistent.

Unacceptable: Little or no spatial order is evident.

Uses spatial expressions (e.g., "The hamburger meat is on a bun. On top of the meat is a piece of lettuce"). [Skill W5 Lt 1200]

Good: Some spatial expressions are used.

Acceptable: A few spatial expressions are used.

Unacceptable: No spatial expressions are used.

Writes about each food in separate paragraphs. [Skill W4 GDe 1120]

Good: One paragraph tells about the hamburger, and the other paragraph tells about the pudding.

Acceptable: Each paragraph generally tells about one food, but references to the other food are also included.

Unacceptable: No relationship of food/paragraph is apparent.

Comment: A transitional expression linking the second paragraph to the first (e.g., "A dish of pudding is next to the hamburger) should not be scored as an inappropriate reference to the other food. On the contrary, such a transitional device is indicative of writing competence.

FORM:

Uses correct grammar and complete sentences. [Skills Lu 1000, 2000, 3000, 4100, 4200, 6000, 7000, 8000, 9000; Lgk 4000 and 5000; Lsp 1100, 1200]

Good: The composition has few or no grammatical errors, and all sentences are complete.

Acceptable: The composition has some grammatical errors, and most sentences are complete.

Unacceptable: The composition has many grammatical errors, and many sentences are fragments and/or run-ons.

Punctuates and capitalizes correctly. [Skills W2 Mp 1100; W4 Mp 3000; W2 Mc 1000, 2000]

Good: The composition has few or no errors.

Acceptable: The composition has some errors.

Unacceptable: The composition has many errors.

Spells correctly. [Skills Sc 1000, 2000, 3000; Sv 1000, 2000 3100, 4000; Sa 1000, 2000; Ssp 2000, 3000, 4000]

Good: Most words are correctly spelled.

Acceptable: Several different words are misspelled.

Unacceptable: Many different words are misspelled.

Comment: The ratings refer to "different words" because many instances of misspelling the same word should be evaluated as one misspelled word.

Writes legibly, with appropriate margins and indentation. [Skills W4 Hcf 4000; W2 Mfs 1000, 2000]

Good: The composition has few or no exceptions to the criterion.

Acceptable: The composition has some exceptions to the criterion.

Unacceptable: The composition has many exceptions to the criterion.

Skill: W2 DPpr 2000

Skill Statement

Writes a straightline narrative.

Comment: A narrative presents an experience to an audience, giving the impression of passage in time. A straightline narrative is a narrative such as an autobiography, which conveys events chronologically; it does not entail the selection and organization of events to build toward a climax as does a climactic narrative (Skill W4 DPpr 3000). Skills listings often state this as "writes a personal narrative."

Skill Description

The student writes a straightline narrative of three or more sentences. The following are narrative-writing skills of this task at this grade level:

Skill W2 GDe 2210: Elaborates for narrative writing: Includes events appropriate for a straightline narrative.

Skill W2 GDpo 4000: Uses chronological order.

See these individual skills for their descriptions.

Assessment

Sample Item

Directions: Read the name of the story. Look at the pictures that that tell the story. Then write a story that tells a friend about the boy and girl who go to the zoo. Write at least one sentence about each picture.

A TRIP TO THE ZOO

[Picture: a girl and a boy getting off a bus at the gate of the zoo; the word Zoo is over the entrance.]

[Picture: a boy and girl on sidewalk, looking toward two cages with animals. One cage has a goat--the word Goat is on a sign. The other cage has a bear, and the word Bear is on a sign.]

[Picture: a boy and a girl climbing on a bus at the exit of zoo.]

Comment: The words write, least, and sentence may not be in students' reading vocabularies at this grade level.

Item Description

Using narrative-writing skills, the student writes the straightline narrative elicited by the stimulus. The pictures in the stimulus must clearly convey the important activities that are to be included in the narrative. If pictures give too much detail, students at this grade level will have difficulty selecting the important story activities that can be related in a few sentences. Also, the events must be those that children at this grade level can understand and that can be described in their vocabulary.

Since this task entails writing a straightline narrative, the pictures should not suggest events that lead to a story climax; e.g., (1) a cow and a horse see a hat they both want, (2) they have a tug of war over the hat, and (3) the climax, the hat rips so that each animal has half a hat.

The title here is above the picture. If the pictures are printed on the same page as that on which students will write, the title should be moved to its appropriate placement, just above the space for writing.

Scoring Key

Scoring Criteria	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
CONTENT:			
Includes sentence(s) for first picture.	___	___	___
Includes sentence(s) for second picture.	___	___	___
Includes sentence(s) for third picture.	___	___	___
Orders sentences correctly.	___	___	___
FORM:*			
Indents the first word of the paragraph.	___		___
Uses margins.	___	___	___
Capitalizes the first word of sentences.	___	___	___
Includes periods at ends of sentences.	___	___	___
Writes legibly.	___	___	___

* No criterion for evaluating spelling is included because evaluating spelling in a writing sample at this level is inappropriate.

W2 DPpr 2000 (continued)

Comment: The "indents first word" criterion has only good and unacceptable ratings because a student either does or does not indent.

Scoring Guide

CONTENT:

Includes sentence(s) for first picture. [Skills W2 Lsp 1100 and W2 GDe 2210]

Good: One or more sentences tell about the girl and boy (1) getting off the bus and (2) going to the zoo.

Acceptable: One or more sentences are written, but they do not contain all the information above.

Unacceptable: No sentences pertain to the picture.

Includes sentence(s) for second picture. [Skills W2 Lsp 1100 and W2 GDe 2210]

Good: One or more sentences tell about the boy and girl seeing (1) a goat and (2) a bear at the zoo.

Acceptable: One or more sentences are written, but they do not contain all the information above.

Unacceptable: The sentences do not pertain to the picture.

Includes sentence(s) for third picture. [Skills W2 Lsp 1100 and W2 GDe 2210]

Good: One or more sentences tell about (1) the boy and girl leaving the zoo and (2) taking the bus.

Acceptable: One or more sentences are written, but they do not contain all the information above.

Unacceptable: The sentences do not pertain to the picture.

Orders sentences correctly. [Skill W2 GDpo 4000]

Good: All sentences are ordered in accordance with the sequence of the pictures.

Acceptable: One or two sentences are out of sequence, but the sequence is still apparent and coherent.

Unacceptable: Many sentences are out of order so that no sequence is apparent in the story telling.

Comment: If sentences are not written for more than one picture, this criterion should not be scored.

FORM:

Indents the first word of the paragraph. [Skill W2 Mfs 1000]

Good: The first word of the paragraph is indented.

Unacceptable: The first word of the paragraph is not indented.

Uses margins. [Skill W2 Mfs 2000]

Good: Margins are evident on both sides of the paper.

Acceptable: A margin is evident for one side of the paper.

Unacceptable: No margins are evident.

Capitalizes the first word of sentences. [Skill W2 Mc 2000]

Good: All or most sentences are capitalized.

Acceptable: Some sentences are capitalized.

Unacceptable: Few or no sentences are capitalized.

Includes periods at the ends of sentences. [Skill W2 Mp 1100]

Good: All or most sentences end with periods.

Acceptable: Some sentences end with periods.

Unacceptable: Few or no sentences end with periods (or with other correct punctuation).

Writes legibly. [Skill W2 Hmf 5000]

Good: All words are readable.

Acceptable: Most words are readable, and unreadable words do not interfere with comprehension of content.

Unacceptable: Many words are unreadable so that content is difficult or impossible to read.

Skill: W3 DPpr 2000

Skill Statement

Writes a straightline narrative.

Comment: A narrative presents an experience to an audience, giving the impression of passage in time. A straightline narrative is a narrative such as an autobiography, which conveys events chronologically; it does not entail the selection and organization of events to build toward a climax as does a climactic narrative (Skill W4 DPpr 3000). Skills listings often state this as "writes a personal narrative."

Skill Description

The student writes a straightline narrative that is a paragraph or more in length. Two important narrative-writing skills are component skills for this task at this grade level:

Skill W2 GDe 2210: Elaborates for narrative writing: includes events appropriate for a straightline narrative.

Skill W2 GDpo 4000: Uses chronological order.

See these individual skills for their descriptions. They are first listed for assessment at the second grade level. Grade-level differences for skills listed at the previous grade level are reflected in the stimulus for and the scoring of the writing sample.

Assessment

Sample Item

Directions: Write a story that tells the boys and girls in your class about the day you started to school for the first time.

- Write about at least three things that happened to you.
- Tell about the things in the order that they happened.
- Give your story a title.

Item Description

Using narrative-writing skills, the student writes the straightline narrative described by the stimulus. The stimulus is more difficult than the stimulus for grade two because it is presented in prose

rather than in pictures. The stimulus describes an experience common to all students--their first day of school. If a student cannot remember his/her first day of school, the examiner can suggest that he/she make up the things that happened. This contingency is not accounted for in the stimulus because it might motivate students to write a story with a plot--a climactic narrative.

Scoring Key

Scoring Criteria	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
CONTENT:			
Includes an appropriate title.	___	___	___
Includes three or more events.	___	___	___
Arranges events in chronological order.	___	___	___
FORM:			
Indents the first word of the paragraph.	___		___
Uses margins.	___	___	___
Capitalizes the first word of sentences.	___	___	___
Includes periods at the end of sentences.	___	___	___
Spells correctly.	___	___	___
Writes legibly.	___	___	___

Comment: The "Indents first word" criterion has only good and unacceptable ratings because a student either does or does not indent.

Scoring Guide

CONTENT:

Includes an appropriate title. [Skill W3 GDe 1200]

Good: An appropriate and original title is included.

Acceptable: An appropriate title is included, but it is not original (e.g., The First Day of School).

Unacceptable: The title is not appropriate or is not included.

Includes three or more events. [Skill W2 GDe 2210]

Good: Three or more events are included.

Acceptable: Two events are included.

Unacceptable: One or no event is included.

Arranges events in chronological order for a straightline narrative. [Skill W2 GDpo 4000]

Good: The events are arranged in chronological order.

Acceptable: One event is out of order.

Unacceptable: Events are not appropriately ordered

Comment: If only one or events are included, this criterion should not be scored.

FORM:

Indents the first word of the paragraph. [Skill W2 Mfs 1000]

Good: The first word of the paragraph is indented.

Unacceptable: The first word of the paragraph is not indented.

Uses margins. [Skill W2 Mfs 2000]

Good: Margins are evident on both sides of the paper.

Acceptable: A margin is evident for one side of the paper.

Unacceptable: No margins are evident.

Capitalizes the first word of sentences. [Skill W2 Mc 2000]

Good: All or most sentences are capitalized.

Acceptable: Some sentences are capitalized.

Unacceptable: Few or no sentences are capitalized.

Includes periods at the end of sentences. [Skill W2 Mp 1100]

Good: All or most sentences end with periods.

Acceptable: Some sentences end with periods.

Unacceptable: Few or no sentences end with periods (or with other correct punctuation).

Spells correctly. [Skills W1 Sc 1110, 1310; W2 Sc 1320, 2100, 2200, 3000; W1 Sv 1100; W2 Sv 1200, 2100, 3100; W3 Sv 4100]

Good: Most words are correctly spelled.

Acceptable: Several different words are misspelled.

Unacceptable: Many different words are misspelled.

Comment: The ratings refer to "different words" because many instances of misspelling the same word should be evaluated as one misspelled word.

Writes legibly. [Skill W2 Hmf 5000]

Good: All words are readable.

Acceptable: Most words are readable, and unreadable words do not interfere with comprehension of content.

Unacceptable: Many words are unreadable so that content is difficult or impossible to read.

Skill: W4 DPpr 3000

Skill Statement

Writes a short climactic narrative.

Comment: A narrative presents an experience to an audience, giving the impression of a passage in time. A climactic narrative includes a plot, which entails selection and organization of events that build toward a climax.

Skill Description

The student writes a short story with a climax. The story may be a humorous story or an adventure story, but it should not be a straightline account (see Skill W2 DPpr 2000). The following are component narrative-writing content skills specific to this task at this grade level:

Skill W4 GDe 2220: Elaborates for narrative writing: Includes events appropriate for a climactic narrative.

Skill W2 GDpo 4000: Uses chronological order.

Skill W3 GDpo 8000: Uses narrative organization: Combines beginning, middle, and ending of a story.

Skill W4 GDe 2230: Elaborates for narrative writing: Includes simple characters.

See these individual skills for their descriptions.

Assessment

Sample Item

Picture: stylized cartoon drawing of a boy and girl sitting by a campfire in front of a tent; near the tent stands a picnic table with food on it; a smiling bear is hiding in the background looking at the food and rubbing its stomach; the bear is clearly visible to the observer, but not to the characters in the picture.

Directions: Write a story about the campers, the bear, and the food on the table.

- Tell who the campers are.
- Have two or more things happen in your story.

W4 DPpr 3000 (continued)

- Have these things lead to a good ending for your story.
- Write at least three paragraphs so that your story will have a beginning, middle, and ending.
- Give your story a good title.

Comment: The words character, paragraph, and title may not be in students' reading vocabularies at this grade level.

Item Description

Using narrative-writing skills, the student writes a short climactic narrative from the picture stimulus. The stimulus presents the characters and the setting for the story. In order to elicit a climactic narrative rather than a straightline narrative, the picture stimulus and the item directions suggest the plot sequence and conflict to be developed in the story (i.e., the bear attempts to take the food and the campers react).

Comment: The cartoon format suggests that the story should be humorous although the directions do not specifically require the use of humor. Such a requirement might unfairly assess beyond learned skills. However, the cartoon format minimizes the likelihood that the student will include excessively violent acts in the story, a response that might be elicited by a more realistic picture stimulus.

The specific instructions to students are used (1) to help ensure that students will produce those features important for the task, and (2) to facilitate the construction of an appropriate scoring key that evaluates these features. The instructions do not name the characters or specify the events that lead to the climax of the story (e.g., "The bear is going to knock over the table"). These elements of the story are developed by the student, using the narrative-writing skills that are the criteria for evaluating the story.

Scoring Key

Scoring Criteria	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
CONTENT:			
Writes an appropriate title	___	___	___
Includes two or more appropriate events.	___	___	___
Arranges events in chronological order.	___	___	___

Scoring Criteria	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Includes a beginning, middle, and ending.	___	___	___
Includes characters.	___	___	___
Shows originality/ creativity.	___	___	

Comment: No space is provided for evaluating originality/creativity as "unacceptable" because this rating would unfairly assess beyond learned skills. However, this criterion is included to "reward" imagination.

FORM:

Uses correct grammar and complete sentences.	___	___	___
Capitalizes and punctuates correctly.	___	___	___
Spells correctly.	___	___	___
Writes legibly, with appropriate margins and indentation.	___	___	___

Scoring Guide

CONTENT:

Writes an appropriate title. [Skill W3 GDe 1200]

Good: The title is appropriate and original.

Acceptable: The title is appropriate.

Unacceptable: The title is not relevant to the story or is not included.

Includes two or more appropriate events. [Skill W4 GDe 2220]

Good: Two significant events or three or more events of less significance are included.

Acceptable: Only one significant event or two insignificant events are included.

Unacceptable: One insignificant event or no event is included.

Arranges events in chronological order. [Skill W2 GDpo 4000]

Good: All or most events are arranged chronologically.

Acceptable: Some events are arranged chronologically.

Unacceptable: Little or no chronological order is evident.

Includes a beginning, middle, and ending (i.e., introduction of characters and setting, development of conflict, climax and resolution of conflict). [Skill W3 GDpo 8000]

Good: All three parts are included.

Acceptable: A climactic ending is included, but the beginning and middle are combined.

Unacceptable: The story has no coherent parts.

Includes characters (i.e., the girl, the boy, and the bear). [Skill W4 GDe 2230]

Good: All three characters are included by name and/or description.

Acceptable: Two characters are included by name and/or description.

Unacceptable: One character or no character is included.

Shows originality/creativity.

Good: Color, style, content distinguish the story from other students' stories.

Acceptable: The composition is similar to other students' stories.

Comment: No skill numbers are listed for originality/creativity because this feature is not the result of any specific skills. Thus no criterion for rating a sample as "unacceptable" is provided because this criterion would unfairly assess beyond learned skills.

FORM:

Uses correct grammar and complete sentences. [Skills W2 Lsp 1100; W3 Lu 3000, 7100; W4 Lu 4100, 6100]

Good: The composition has few or no grammatical errors and all sentences are complete.

Acceptable: The composition has some grammatical errors and most sentences are complete.

Unacceptable: The composition has many grammatical errors and many sentences are fragments and/or run-ons.

Capitalizes and punctuates correctly. [Skills W2 Mc 1000, 2000; W2 Mp 1100]

Good: The composition has few or no errors.

Acceptable: The composition has some errors.

Unacceptable: The composition has many errors.

Comment: Although punctuation of dialogue quotations may be relevant to this product, these skills are not assessed until grade 5 (see Skill Mp 8000). Therefore, dialogue punctuation should not be evaluated here.

Spells correctly. [Skills W2 Sc 1110, 1310, 1320, 2000, 3000; W4 Sc 1200; W1 Sv 1100; W2 Sv 1200, 2100, 3100; W3 Sv 4100; W4 Sv 1300; Sa 1000, 2000; Sm 1000]

Good: Most words are spelled correctly.

Acceptable: Several different words are misspelled.

Unacceptable: Many different words are misspelled.

Comment: The ratings refer to "different words" because many instances of misspelling the same word should be evaluated as one misspelled word.

Writes legibly, with appropriate margins and indentation. [Skills W4 Hcf 4000, W2 Mfs 1000, W2 Mfs 2000]

Good: The composition has few or no exceptions to the criterion.

Acceptable: The composition has some exceptions to the criterion.

Unacceptable: The composition has many exceptions to the criterion.

Skill: W5 DPpr 3000

Skill Statement

Writes a short climactic narrative.

Comment: A narrative presents an experience to an audience, giving the impression of passage in time. A climactic narrative includes a plot, which entails the selection and organization of events to build toward a climax.

Skill Description

The student writes a short climactic narrative of three or more paragraphs. The following are narrative-writing skills of this product-writing task at this grade level:

Skill W4 GDe 2220: Elaborates for narrative writing: Includes events appropriate for a climactic narrative.

Skill W2 GDpo 4000: Uses chronological order.

Skill W3 GDpo 8000: Uses narrative organization: Combines beginning, middle, and ending of a story.

Skill W4 GDe 2230: Elaborates for narrative writing: Includes simple characters.

See these individual skills for their descriptions. Scoring of these skills and of the form skills, as well as the length of the story, differentiate this narrative-writing task from that specified for fourth grade. Although using chronological transitional expressions (Skill W5 Lt 1100) may be a component skill of this task at this grade level, it is not included for scoring because the writing sample may be completed successfully without employing this skill.

Assessment

Sample Item

Directions: Write a story for the people in your class. Tell about one or two characters who visit a strange house. Only ghosts live in the house.

- Have two or more things happen to the characters.
- Have these things lead to an exciting ending of the story.
- Write at least three paragraphs so your story has a beginning, middle, and ending.
- Give your story a title.

Item Description

Using narrative-writing skills, the student writes the story requested by the stimulus. The stimulus describes a familiar story type--a ghost story. The series of instructions on including specific features helps ensure the production of these features and facilitates the construction of an appropriate scoring key that evaluates these features.

Scoring Key

Scoring Criteria	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
CONTENT:			
Writes an appropriate title.	___	___	___
Includes two or more appropriate events.	___	___	___
Arranges events in chronological order.	___	___	___
Includes a beginning, middle, and ending.	___	___	___
Includes one or two characters in the events.	___	___	___
Shows originality/ creativity.	___	___	
Comment: No space is provided for evaluating originality/creativity as "unacceptable" because this rating would unfairly assess beyond learned skills. However, this criterion is included to "reward" imagination.			
FORM:			
Uses correct grammar and complete sentences.	___	___	___
Capitalizes and punctuates correctly.	___	___	___
Spells correctly.	___	___	___
Writes legibly, with appropriate margins and indentation.	___	___	___

Scoring Guide

CONTENT:

Writes an appropriate title. [Skill W3 GDe 1200]

Good: The title is appropriate and original.

Acceptable: The title is appropriate.

Unacceptable: The title is not relevant to the story or is not included.

Includes two or more appropriate events. [Skill W4 GDe 2220]

Good: Two significant events or three or more events of less significance are included.

Acceptable: Only one significant event or two insignificant events are included.

Unacceptable: One insignificant event or no event is included.

Arranges events in chronological order. [Skill W2 GDpo 4000]

Good: All or most events are arranged chronologically.

Acceptable: Some events are arranged chronologically.

Unacceptable: No chronological ordering is evident.

Includes a beginning, middle, and ending (i.e., introduction of characters and setting, development of conflict, climax and resolution of conflict). [Skill W3 GDpo 8000]

Good: All three parts are included.

Acceptable: A climactic ending is included, but the beginning and middle are combined.

Unacceptable: The story has no coherent parts.

Includes one or two characters in the events. [Skill W4 GDe 2230]

Good: One developed character is included, or two distinct characters are included.

Acceptable: One character is included only by name.

Unacceptable: No characters are included.

Shows originality/creativity.

Good: Color, style, content distinguish the story from other students' stories.

Acceptable: The composition is similar to other students' stories.

Comment: No skill numbers are listed for originality/creativity because this feature is not the result of any specific skills. Thus no criterion for rating a sample as "unacceptable" is provided because this criterion would unfairly assess beyond learned skills.

FORM:

Uses correct grammar and complete sentences. [Skills Lu 1000, 2000, 3000, 4100, 4200, 6000, 7000, 8000, 9000; Lgk 4000 and 4000; Lsp 1000]

Good: The composition has few or no grammatical errors and all sentences are complete.

Acceptable: The composition has some grammatical errors and most sentences are complete.

Unacceptable: The composition has many grammatical errors and many sentences are fragments and/or run-ons.

Capitalizes and punctuates correctly. [Skills W2 Mp 1100; W4 Mp 3000; W2 Mc 1000, 2000; W4 Mc 7000; W5 Mp 8000; W5 Mfs 8000]

Good: The composition has few or no errors.

Acceptable: The composition has some errors.

Unacceptable: The composition has many errors.

Spells correctly. [Skills Sc 1000, 2000, 3000; Sv 1000, 2000, 3100, 4000; Sa 1000, 2000; Ssp 2000, 3000, 4000]

Good: Most words are correctly spelled.

Acceptable: Several different words are misspelled.

Unacceptable; Many different words are misspelled.

Comment: The ratings refer to "different words" because many instances of misspelling the same word should be evaluated as one misspelled word.

Writes legibly, with appropriate margins and indentation.
[Skills W4 Hcf 4000; W2 Hfs 1000, 2000]

Good:	The composition has few or no exceptions to the criterion.
Acceptable:	The composition has some exceptions to the criterion.
Unacceptable:	The composition has many exceptions to the criterion.

Skill: W4 DPpr 4000

Skill Statement

Writes an expository composition.

Skill Description

The student writes an expository composition that explains a simple procedure, e.g., following a map. The following are expository-writing content skills of this product-writing task at this grade level:

Skill W4 GDe 2312: Includes factual content: procedural steps.

Skill W4 GDpo 5100: Uses logical order: procedural order.

Skill W4 Ld 5000: Uses precise language (expository writing).

See these individual skills for their descriptions.

Assessment

Sample Item

Directions: Study the map. Find the library and the museum. Write directions that tell a new person in town how to get from the library to the museum.

- Write the directions in an order that is easy to follow.
- Do not leave out any important information about which way to go or what to watch for along the way.

[map stimulus with landmarks and with library and museum in boldface and at opposite ends of map]

Comment: The words important and information may not be in students' reading vocabularies at this grade level.

Item Description

Using expository-writing skills, the student writes the map directions elicited by the stimulus. The stimulus is a map containing landmarks likely to be familiar to the student. Only one route between start and finish points should be possible in any map stimulus. The specific instructions to students are used (1) to help ensure that students will produce those features important for the task, and (2) to facilitate the construction of an appropriate scoring key that evaluates these features.

Scoring Key

Scoring Criteria	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
CONTENT:			
Includes critical information about landmarks.	___	___	___
Includes important information about direction of movement.	___	___	___
Writes directions in a logical order.	___	___	___
Uses precise language.	___	___	___
Limits the paragraph to one main idea.	___	___	___
FORM:			
Uses correct grammar and complete sentences.	___	___	___
Capitalizes and punctuates correctly.	___	___	___
Spells correctly.	___	___	___
Writes legibly, with appropriate margins and indentation.	___	___	___

Scoring Guide

CONTENT:

Includes critical information about landmarks [specific critical landmarks are noted here for the scorer's use]. [Skill W4 GDe 2312]

Good: Most critical landmarks are referenced.

Acceptable: Some critical landmarks are referenced.

Unacceptable: Few or no landmarks are referenced.

Includes important information about direction of movement [specific information about direction is noted for the scorer's use]. [Skill W4 GDe 2312]

Good: Enough directional information is given to provide the reader with all necessary knowledge about movement.

Acceptable: Some directional information is given.

Unacceptable: Little or no directional information is given.

Writes directions in a logical order. [Skill W4 GDpo 5100]

Good: All information is given in sequential order.

Acceptable: Most information is given in sequential order.

Unacceptable: Little or no information is given in sequential order.

Uses precise language. [Skill W4 Ld 5000]

Good: Precise words are used to give directions, e.g., "north" or "left."

Acceptable: General words are used to give directions, e.g., "down the street."

Unacceptable: Language used does not convey a sense of direction.

Limits the paragraph to one main idea. [Skill W4 GDe 1120]

Good: All or most sentences pertain to following the map.

Acceptable: Many sentences pertain to following the map.

Unacceptable: Few or no sentences pertain to following the map.

FORM:

Uses correct grammar and complete sentences. [Skills W4 Lu 4100; W3 Lu 7100; W2 Lsp 1100]

Good: The composition has few or no grammatical errors and all sentences are complete.

Acceptable: The composition has some grammatical errors and most sentences are complete.

Unacceptable: The composition has many grammatical errors and many sentences are fragments and/or run-ons.

Capitalizes and punctuates correctly. [Skills W2 Mc 2000, W2 Mp 1100]

Good: The composition has few or no errors.

Acceptable: The composition has some errors.

Unacceptable: The composition has many errors.

Spells correctly. [Skills W2 Sc 1110, 1310, 1320, 2000, 3000; W1 Sv 1000; W2 Sv 1200, 2100, 3100; W3 Sv 4100; W4 Sv 4200]

Good: Most words are correctly spelled.

Acceptable: Several different words are misspelled.

Unacceptable: Many different words are misspelled.

Comment: The ratings refer to "different words" because many instances of misspelling the same word should be evaluated as one misspelled word.

Writes legibly, with appropriate margins and indentation. [Skills W4 Hcf 4000, W2 Mfs 1000, 2000]

Good: The composition has few or no exceptions to the criterion.

Acceptable: The composition has some exceptions to the criterion.

Unacceptable: The composition has many exceptions to the criterion.

Skill: W5 DPpr 4000

Skill Statement

Writes an expository composition.

Skill Description

The student writes an expository composition that explains a procedure. The following are expository-writing skills of this task at this grade level:

Skill W5 GDe 2313: Elaborates for expository writing: includes factual content: part/whole relationships.

Skill W4 GDpo 5100: Uses logical order: procedural order.

Skill W5 Lt 1300: Uses transitional expressions to link sentences: logical expressions.

Skill W4 Ld 5000: Uses precise language (expository writing).

See these individual skills for their descriptions.

Assessment

Sample Item

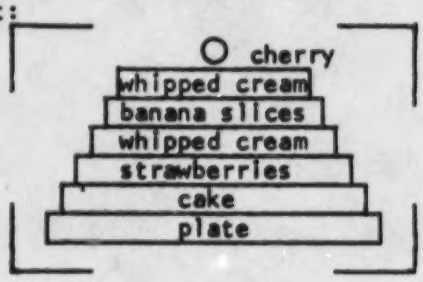
Directions: Read the contents and study the layers of the Fruit and Whipped Cream Treat.

Fruit and Whipped Cream Treat

Contents

1 yellow cake
1 cup of strawberries
1 cup of cut-up bananas
2 cups of whipped cream
1 cherry

Specifications for picture of treat:



Write directions that explain to someone who has never fixed food how to put the Fruit and Whipped Cream Treat together.

- Start with the first thing you do.
- Tell about each part of the Treat that you put together.

- Tell about the parts in the order that you must put them together.
- Be sure to use exact words.
- Use words like next to join some of the sentences in your paragraphs.

Item Description

Using expository-writing skills, the student writes the composition requested by the stimulus. The stimulus must be a picture of a simple whole with its parts graphically displayed. The order in which the parts are connected should also be simply and graphically displayed. At this grade level, no working (i.e., moving) parts should be included in the part-whole stimulus object.

The series of instructions on including features helps ensure production of these features and facilitates the construction of an appropriate scoring key that evaluates these features.

Scoring Key

Scoring Criteria	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
CONTENT:			
Includes all parts of the Treat.	___	___	___
Writes about the parts in the order in which they are put together.	___	___	___
Uses precise language.	___	___	___
Uses logical transitions.	___	___	___
Uses sentences that pertain to the main idea.	___	___	___
FORM:			
Uses correct grammar and complete sentences.	___	___	___
Capitalizes and punctuates correctly.	___	___	___
Spells correctly.	___	___	___
Writes legibly, with appropriate margins and indentation.	___	___	___

Scoring Guide

CONTENT:

Includes all parts of the Treat (i.e., plate, cake, strawberries, [first] whipped cream, banana slices, [second] whipped cream, cherry). [Skill W5 GDe 2313]

Good: All parts are included.

Acceptable: Most parts are included.

Unacceptable: Many parts are missing.

Writes about the parts in the order in which they are put together (i.e., plate, cake, strawberries, whipped cream, banana slices, whipped cream, cherry). [Skill W4 GDpo 5100]

Good: Of the parts included, most are in the right order.

Acceptable: Of the parts included, many are in the right order.

Unacceptable: Of the parts included, many are not in the right order.

Uses precise language. [Skill W4 Ld 5000]

Good: Precise words are generally used to explain the procedure; e.g., "spread" is used to explain adding a food part to the top of a previous food part.

Acceptable: General words are used to explain the procedure; e.g., "put on" is used to explain adding a food part to the top of a previous food part.

Unacceptable: Language used does not convey a sense of the procedure.

Uses logical transitions. [Skill W5 Lt 1300]

Good: Some logical transitions for time (e.g., "then," "next"), space (e.g., "on top of"), and possibly reason (e.g., "because") are used.

Acceptable: A few logical transitions are used.

Unacceptable: No logical transitions are used.

Uses sentences that pertain to the main idea. [Skills W5 GDe 1120, 1150]

Good: All or most sentences pertain to making the Treat.

Acceptable: Many sentences pertain to making the Treat.

Unacceptable: Few or no sentences pertain to making the Treat.

FORM:

Uses correct grammar and complete sentences. [Skills Lu 1000, 2000, 3000, 4100, 4200, 6000, 7000, 8000, 9000; Lgk 4000 and 5000; Lsp 1100 and 1200]

Good: The composition has few or no grammatical errors, and all sentences are complete.

Acceptable: The composition has some grammatical errors, and most sentences are complete.

Unacceptable: The composition has many grammatical errors, and many sentences are fragments and/or run-ons.

Capitalizes and punctuates correctly. [Skills W2 Mp 1100; W4 Mp 3000; W2 Mc 1000, 2000]

Good: The composition has few or no errors.

Acceptable: The composition has some errors.

Unacceptable: The composition has many errors.

Spells correctly. [Skills Sc 1000, 2000, 3000; Sv 1000, 2000, 3100, 4000; Sa 1000, 2000; Ssp 2000, 3000, 4000]

Good: Most words are correctly spelled.

Acceptable: Several different words are misspelled

Unacceptable: Many different words are misspelled.

Comment: The ratings refer to "different words" because many instances of misspelling the same word should be evaluated as one misspelled word.

Writes legibly, with appropriate margins and indentation. [Skills W4 Hcf 4000; W2 Mfs 1000, 2000]

Good: The composition has few or no exceptions to the criterion.

W5 DPpr 4000 (continued)

Acceptable:	The composition has some exceptions to the criterion.
Unacceptable:	The composition has many exceptions to the criterion.

Skill: W6 DPpr 4000

Skill Statement

Writes an expository composition.

Skill Description

The student writes a comparison/contrast paper of at least four paragraphs. The following are expository-writing skills of this task at this grade level:

Skill W6 GDe 2314: Includes factual content: comparisons/contrasts.

Skill W5 GDpo 5300: Uses logical order: comparison/contrast order.

Skill W4 Ld 5000: Uses precise language (expository writing).

Skill W5 Lt 1300: Uses transitional expressions to link sentences of a paragraph: logical expressions.

The following content skills are also relevant to this task:

Skill W5 GDe 1140: Uses a topic sentence for a paragraph.

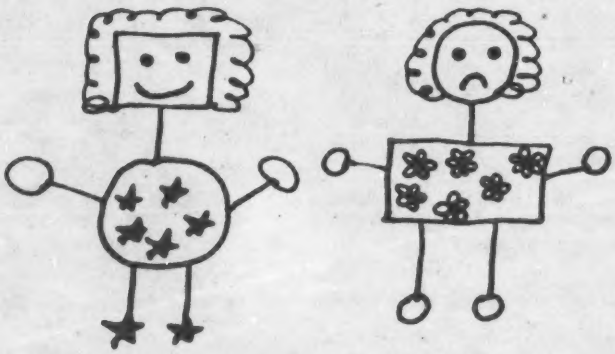
Skill W6 GDpo 7000: Uses beginning, body, and end paragraphs.

See these individual skills for their descriptions.

Assessment

Sample Item

Directions: Study the creatures below. They are called Gasps.



Picture of two fantasy figures: Both have curly hair of same color, stick necks, stick arms, stick legs, round hands; one has a square head, big smile, round body, stars on body, star feet; the other has round head, frowning mouth, square body, flowers on body, round feet.

Tell how these two Gasps are alike and how they are different. Write at least four paragraphs.

- Make the first paragraph a beginning paragraph with a topic sentence.

- Tell about all the ways the Gasps are alike in one middle paragraph.
- Tell about all the ways they are different in the other middle paragraph.
- Make the last paragraph an ending paragraph.
- Be sure to use words like above and at the sides and exact words like stars rather than things.

Comment: The directions for writing an ending paragraph should be deleted if selected-response assessment is used for Skill W6 GDpo 7000.

Item Description

Using expository-writing skills, the student writes a comparison/contrast composition. The stimulus consists of two fantasy figures with visible similarities and differences that are readily identified by the student. Fantasy figures are preferable to real figures, such as a dog and a cat, because students may bring into the comparison from their own experience features that are not accounted for in the scoring guide for this task. Such features would complicate the scoring since it is impossible to provide for all features that students might include. Also, it is difficult to evaluate the validity of such features that come from experience rather than from the stimulus.

The item as written requests that students write four paragraphs. This requirement is included to assess Skill W6 GDpo 7000: Uses beginning, body, and end paragraphs. If this skill is assessed by selected-response items, the writing sample may be revised to permit fewer paragraphs. However, the paragraph of contrasts and the paragraph of comparisons must remain as criteria in the stimulus to ensure that students use logical ordering in writing their comparison/contrast compositions.

Scoring Key

Scoring Criteria	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
CONTENT:			
Uses a topic sentence.	___	___	___
Includes one paragraph of comparisons.	___	___	___
Includes one paragraph of contrasts.	___	___	___

Scoring Criteria	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Organizes the comparisons and contrasts logically.	___	___	___
Uses precise language.	___	___	___
Uses transitional expressions for logical order.	___	___	___
Uses beginning, body, and end paragraphs.	___	___	___

Comment: The criterion "Uses beginning, body, and end paragraphs" should be deleted if selected-response assessment is used for Skill W6 GDpo 7000.

FORM:

Uses correct grammar and complete sentences.	___	___	___
Capitalizes and punctuates correctly.	___	___	___
Spells correctly.	___	___	___
Writes legibly, with appropriate margins and indentation.	___	___	___

Scoring Guide

CONTENT:

Uses a topic sentence. [Skill W5 GDe 1140]

Good: A topic sentence is included for the first paragraph.

Acceptable: A beginning sentence is included.

Unacceptable: No coherent beginning sentence is evident.

Includes comparisons (i.e., curly hair of same color, stick necks, stick arms, round hands, stick legs).
[Skills W6 GDe 2314; W4 GDe 1120]

Good: All or most of the comparisons are included.

Acceptable: Some comparisons are included.

Unacceptable: Few or no comparisons are included.

Includes contrasts (i.e., round head/square head; smiling mouth/frowning mouth; round body/square body; stars/flowers; star feet/round feet). [Skills W6 GDe 2314; W4 GDe 1120]

Good: Most or all the contrasts are included.

Acceptable: Some contrasts are included.

Unacceptable: Few or no contrasts are included.

Organizes the comparisons and contrasts logically. [Skill W6 GDpo 5300]

Good: All the comparisons included are in one paragraph, and the contrasts included are in the other paragraph.

Acceptable: Most of the comparisons included are in one paragraph, and most of the contrasts included are in the other paragraph.

Unacceptable: No logical organization is apparent.

Uses precise language. [Skill W4 Ld 5000]

Good: Precise language is generally used in making comparisons and contrasts (e.g., curly is used to describe hair rather than funny).

Acceptable: General language is used in making comparisons and contrasts (e.g., funny is used to describe hair).

Unacceptable: No comparisons and contrasts are made.

Uses transitional expressions for logical order (e.g., space order words such as above, at the side). [Skill W5 Lt 1300]

Good: A number of different transitional expressions are included.

Acceptable: Several transitional expressions are used.

Unacceptable: Transitional expressions are not used.

Uses beginning, body, and end paragraphs. [Skill W6 GDpo 7000]

Good: Four paragraphs are included, with the middle two being body paragraphs.

Acceptable: Three paragraphs are included.

Unacceptable: No coherent paragraphing is used.

Comment: The guidelines for "Uses beginning, body and end paragraphs" should be deleted if this criterion is deleted from the scoring key.

FORM:

Uses correct grammar and complete sentences. [Skills Lu 1000, 2000, 3000, 4000, 6000, 7000, 8000, 9000; Lgk 4000 and 5000; Lsp 1000; GDpe 3000]

Good: The composition has few or no grammatical errors, and all sentences are complete.

Acceptable: The composition has some grammatical errors, and most sentences are complete.

Unacceptable: The composition has many grammatical errors, and many sentences are fragments and/or run-ons.

Capitalizes and punctuates correctly. [Skills Mc 1000, 2000; Mp 1000]

Good: The composition has few or no errors.

Acceptable: The composition has some errors.

Unacceptable: The composition has many errors.

Spells correctly. [Skills Sc 1000; Sv 1000, 2000, 3000; Ssp 3000, 4000]

Good: Most words are correctly spelled.

Acceptable: Several different words are misspelled.

Unacceptable: Many different words are misspelled.

Comment: The ratings refer to "different words" because many instances of misspelling the same word should be evaluated as one misspelled word.

Writes legibly, with appropriate margins and indentation. [Skills W4 Hcf 4000; W2 Mfs 1000, 2000]

Good: The composition has few or no exceptions to the criterion.

Acceptable: The composition has some exceptions to the criterion.

Unacceptable: The composition has many exceptions to the criterion.

Skill: W6 DPpr 5000

Skill Statement

Writes a persuasive composition.

Skill Description

The student writes a persuasive composition using the following persuasive-writing skills:

Skill W6 GDe 2410: States a point of view.

Skill W6 GDe 2420: Includes arguments for a point of view.

Skill W6 GDe 2430: Includes supporting evidence for arguments.

Skill W6 GDpo 5200: Uses logical order: order of importance.

Skill W5 Lt 1300: Uses transitional expressions to link sentences of a paragraph: logical expressions.

See these individual skills for their descriptions.

Assessment

Sample Item

Directions: How would you answer this question:

Should there be more school holidays?

Write an argument for an answer that you would give to your mother and father.

- Start with a sentence that gives your opinion.
- Give at least three reasons that support your opinion.
- Write at least one sentence that explains or proves each reason.

  For example, suppose you supported your opinion that people should read books with the reason that books are pleasant to read. A sentence that explains that reason could be "They have funny stories that can make you laugh."

- Write your reasons in their order of importance: Go from least important to most important.

W6 DPpr 5000 (continued)

Item Description

Using persuasive-writing skills, the student writes a composition that supports his/her point of view on the question asked (here, for example, Should there be more school holidays?). The stimulus consists of the question asked and a series of features to be included in the composition. It also exemplifies one of the features to ensure student understanding.

The question is included as part of the stimulus to avoid using a sentence about the topic because students might then simply copy the sentences for their statement of opinion. The question syntax will minimally require a transformation of the question into a declarative sentence.

The topic for a persuasive-writing task must be one on which students are most likely to have an opinion. Consequently, topics that, for example, pose questions about politics are inappropriate because many students will neither be adequately aware of political issues nor have an opinion about them. Furthermore, even when students do have political opinions, they may be unable to support them.

The series of instructions on including features helps ensure production of the features and facilitates the construction of an appropriate scoring key that evaluates these features.

Scoring Key

Scoring Criteria	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
CONTENT:			
States a point of view.	___	___	___
Includes arguments for the point of view.	___	___	___
Includes supporting evidence for arguments.	___	___	___
Organizes arguments logically.	___	___	___
Uses transitional expressions for logical ordering.	___	___	___
FORM:			
Uses correct grammar and complete sentences.	___	___	___

Scoring Criteria	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Capitalizes and punctuates correctly.	___	___	___
Spells correctly.	___	___	___
Writes legibly, with appropriate margins and indentation.	___	___	___

Scoring Guide

CONTENT:

States a point of view. [Skills W6 GDe 2410; W5 GDe 1140]

Good: A point of view is stated in the beginning sentence.

Acceptable: A beginning sentence is included, but it does not state a point of view.

Unacceptable: No coherent beginning sentence is included.

Includes arguments for the point of view. [Skills W6 GDe 2420; W5 GDe 1150]

Good: Three reasons are included.

Acceptable: Two reasons are included.

Unacceptable: One or no reason is included.

Includes supporting evidence for arguments. [Skills W6 GDe 2430; W5 GDe 1150]

Good: Appropriate supporting evidence for one or more arguments is included.

Acceptable: Little supporting evidence is included.

Unacceptable: No attempt is made to include supporting evidence.

Organizes arguments logically (i.e., the student attempts an ordering according to importance; judgments about whether one argument is more important than another are not appropriate for the evaluator, however, because the importance "ranking" may be subjective). [Skill W5 GDpo 5200]

Good: Arguments are generally presented in a logical order.

Acceptable: Arguments are presented in a logical order with some material seemingly out of place.

Unacceptable: No logical organization is evident.

Uses transitional expressions for logical ordering (e.g., cause-effect words such as because, however, therefore). [Skill W5 Lt 1300]

Good: Some transitional expressions are included.

Acceptable: Few transitional expressions are included.

Unacceptable: No transitional expressions are used.

FORM:

Uses correct grammar and complete sentences. [Skills Lu 1000, 2000, 3000, 4000, 6000, 7000, 8000, 9000; Lgk 4000 and 5000; Lsp 1000]

Good: The composition has few or no grammatical errors, and all sentences are complete.

Acceptable: The composition has some grammatical errors, and most sentences are complete.

Unacceptable: The composition has many grammatical errors, and many sentences are fragments and/or run-ons.

Capitalizes and punctuates correctly. [Skills Mc 1000, 2000; Mp 1000]

Good: The composition has few or no errors.

Acceptable: The composition has some errors.

Unacceptable: The composition has many errors.

Spells correctly. [Skills Sc 1000; Sv 1000, 2000, 3000; Ssp 3000, 4000]

Good: Most words are correctly spelled.

Acceptable: Several different words are misspelled.

Unacceptable: Many different words are misspelled.

Comment: The ratings refer to "different words" because many instances of misspelling the same word should be evaluated as one misspelled word.

Writes legibly, with appropriate margins and indentation.
[Skills W4 Hcf 4000; W2 Mfs 1000, 2000]

Good:	The composition has few or no exceptions to the criterion.
Acceptable:	The composition has some exceptions to the criterion.
Unacceptable:	The composition has many exceptions to the criterion.

Skill: W3 DPpr 6000

Skill Statement

Writes an invitation in the form of a personal letter.

Skill Description

The student incorporates the expository content of an invitation into the format of a personal letter. The following are content and form skills specific to this task at this grade level:

Skill W3 GDe 2311: Elaborates for expository writing: includes factual content: information on what, when, where content.

Skill W3 GDe 2510: Elaborates for a letter: includes request in letter of invitation.

Skill W3 Mfs 4100: Includes the parts of a personal letter.

Skill W3 Mfs 5100: Places personal letter parts correctly.

Skill W3 Mc 4000: Capitalizes greeting and complimentary closing of a letter.

Skill W3 Mp 6100: Punctuates greeting and complimentary closing of a personal letter.

See these individual skills for their descriptions.

Assessment

Sample Item

Directions: Bill lives at 2209 Front Street in Oakland, California. On Sunday, he is giving a birthday party for Beth at his house at two in the afternoon. Sunday is May 10. Bill wants to ask Lee to come to the party. He wants to write a letter to Lee on May 2, 1980. Write the letter from Bill to Lee.

- Be sure to tell what Bill is doing for Beth.
- Be sure to tell when and where the party will be held, and ask Lee to come.
- Be sure to include all the parts of a letter and put them in the right place on the page.
- Be sure to capitalize and punctuate the letter correctly.

W3 DPpr 6000 (continued)

Comments: The words California, afternoon, capitalize, and punctuate may not be in students' reading vocabularies at this grade level.

Examiners may provide a less complex stimulus by allowing the students to write the invitation using their own names, addresses, and dates. This modification can limit the complexity, but it must be done by the individual examiner, who can then make the corresponding adjustments in the scoring structure.

Item Description

Using expository-writing and letter-writing skills, the student writes an invitation in the form of a personal letter. The stimulus presents all the important factual content that should be included in the letter:

What: birthday party for Beth
When: Sunday, May 10, at two in the afternoon
Where: 2209 Front Street, Oakland, California
Date of letter: May 2, 1980

It is important that the stimulus not present the information as it should be written and ordered in the letter. This would allow students to copy the information from the stimulus without employing the content and form skills that are the criteria for evaluating the letter.

Scoring Key

Scoring Criteria	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
CONTENT:			
Includes information on what content.	___	___	___
Includes information on when content.	___	___	___
Includes information on where content.	___	___	___
Includes request.	___		___

Comments: The first three content criteria of the scoring key are combined in the scoring guide because the guidelines for rating are the same for each criterion.

The "includes request" criterion has only good and unacceptable ratings because a student either does or does not include a stated request.

FORMAT:

Includes all parts of a personal letter.	___	___	___
Places all letter parts correctly.	___	___	___

FORM:

Punctuates correctly.	___	___	___
Capitalizes correctly.	___	___	___
Indents first word of paragraph(s) in the body of the letter.	___		___
Uses margins.	___	___	___
Spells correctly.	___	___	___
Writes legibly.	___	___	___

Comment: The "indents first word" criterion has only good and unacceptable ratings because a student either does or does not indent.

Scoring Guide

CONTENT:

Includes information on what, when, where content (i.e., birthday party for Beth; Sunday, May 10, at two in the afternoon; 2209 Front Street, Oakland). [Skill W3 GDe 2311]

Good: All important information is included.

Acceptable: Most important information is included.

Unacceptable: Much important information is omitted.

W3 DPpr 6000 (continued)

Comment: If the sender's address is included in the heading of the letter, it need not be repeated in the body. However, the body should include some reference to the location of the party (e.g., "at my house"). Moreover, the name of the city need not be included in the body of the letter; the street address is sufficient.

Includes request. [Skill W3 GDe 2510]

Good: The request is stated (e.g., "Please come to a birthday party . . .").

Unacceptable: The request is not included.

FORMAT:

Includes all parts of a personal letter (i.e., date, greeting, body, complimentary closing, signature; the sender's address may also be included above the date; for scoring this criterion, proper placement is ignored--see criterion below). [Skill W3 Mfs 4100]

Good: All or most letter parts are included.

Acceptable: Some letter parts are included.

Unacceptable: Few or no letter parts are included so that the product is not recognizable as a letter.

Places all letter parts correctly (see parts above). [Skill W3 Mfs 5100]

Good: All or most letter parts are placed correctly.

Acceptable: Some letter parts are placed correctly.

Unacceptable: Few or no letter parts are placed correctly.

Comment: This criterion is scored unacceptable if no letter parts are included.

FORM:

Punctuates correctly (i.e., comma following greeting and complimentary closing; periods at end of sentences). [Skills W3 Mp 6100 and W2 Mp 1100]

Good: The letter has few or no punctuation errors.

Acceptable: The letter has some punctuation errors.

Unacceptable: The letter has many punctuation errors.

Comment: Although the punctuation of dates and addresses is relevant to this letter-writing assessment, these skills are not assessed until fourth grade. Thus they should not be considered in scoring this sample.

W3 DPpr 6000 (continued)

Capitalizes correctly (i.e., names of persons, first word of sentence, names of months, days, streets, cities, states, greeting and complimentary closing). [Skills Mc 1000, 2000, 3000, 4000]

Good: The letter has few or no capitalization errors.

Acceptable: The letter has some capitalization errors.

Unacceptable: The letter has many capitalization errors.

Indents first word of paragraph(s) in the body of the letter. [Skill W2 Mfs 1000]

Good: The first word of the body is indented.

Unacceptable: The first word of the body is not indented.

Uses margins. [Skill W2 Mfs 2000]

Good: Margins are evident on both sides of the paper.

Acceptable: A margin is evident for one side of the paper.

Unacceptable: No margins are evident.

Spells correctly. [Skills W1 Sc 1110, 1310; W2 Sc 1320, 2100, 2200, 3000; W1 Sv 1100; W2 Sv 1200, 2100, 3100, 4100]

Good: Most words are spelled correctly.

Acceptable: Several different words are misspelled.

Unacceptable: Many different words are misspelled.

Comment: The ratings refer to "different words" because many instances of misspelling the same word should be evaluated as one misspelled word.

Writes legibly. [Skill W2 Hmf 5000]

Good: All words are readable.

Acceptable: Most words are readable, and unreadable words do not interfere with comprehension of content.

Unacceptable: Many words are unreadable so that content is difficult or impossible to read.

Skill: W6 DPpr 7000

Skill Statement

Writes a business letter.

Skill Description

The student writes a business letter, including the appropriate content and using format skills for business letters. The following are content and form skills specific to this task at this grade level:

Skill W6 GDe 2520: Includes content appropriate for a business letter.

Skill W3 GDe 2311: Elaborates for expository writing: Includes factual content: Information on what, where, when content.

Skill W4 Ld 5000: Uses precise language (expository writing).

Skill W3 Mc 4000: Capitalizes greeting and complimentary closing of a letter.

Skill W5 Mp 6200: Punctuates greeting and complimentary closing of a business letter.

Skill W5 Mfs 4200: Includes the parts of a business letter.

Skill W5 Mfs 5200: Places business letter parts correctly.

See these individual skills for their descriptions.

Assessment

Sample Item

Directions: Read the following newspaper advertisement:

> Learn how to start your own ant farm. Read about it in our new book, Ant Farms are Fun. To order this book, send a check or money order for $5.50 to Ms. Jane Forest, Hobby Book Company, 8685 State Street, Oak Park, California 92121.

Write a business letter asking for the book.

- Be sure to include all the important information.
- Use language that is correct for a business letter, including exact words like book rather than thing.

- Include all the parts of a business letter and put them in the right place on the page.

- Use your own address and today's date.

Comment: The words advertisement, Ms., and California may not be in students' reading vocabularies at this grade level.

Item Description

Using expository-writing and letter-writing skills, the student writes a business letter. The stimulus is an advertisement. It and the directions provide all the information needed to write the business letter so that it includes the appropriate content and is written in correct letter format. An advertisement is an especially satisfactory stimulus because it entails less discourse for students to read while still providing all the elements required for the letter. A shorter stimulus is also facilitated by asking students to use their own address and "today's" date.

The personal title is included so that students need not make judgments about which title is appropriate to include (e.g., Ms./ Mrs./Miss).

Scoring Key

Scoring Criteria	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
CONTENT:			
Includes appropriate content in body of letter.	___	___	___
Includes all important information in body of letter.	___	___	___
Uses precise language.	___	___	___
FORMAT:			
Includes all parts of a business letter.	___	___	___
Places all letter parts correctly.	___	___	___
FORM:			
Uses correct grammar and complete sentences.	___	___	___

Scoring Criteria	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Capitalizes correctly.	___	___	___
Punctuates correctly.	___	___	___
Spells correctly.	___	___	___
Writes legibly, with appropriate margins and indentation.	___	___	___

Comment: Capitalization and punctuation are separated for evaluation here because of the importance of the component Skills to writing letters.

Scoring Guide

CONTENT:

Includes appropriate content in body of letter. [Skill W6 GDe 2520]

Good: All content is appropriate.

Acceptable: Most content is appropriate.

Unacceptable: Much content is not appropriate.

Includes all important information in body of letter (i.e., advertisement, request, book name, money). [Skill W3 GDe 2311]

Good: All important information is included.

Acceptable: Most important information is included.

Unacceptable: Much important information is not included.

Uses precise language (e.g., uses the exact term book rather than the general term thing). [Skill W4 Ld 5000]

Good: Precise words are used to explain what is being requested in the letter.

Acceptable: General words are used.

Unacceptable: Language does not explain request.

W6 DPpr 7000 (continued)

FORMAT:

Includes all parts of a business letter (i.e., heading and data, inside address, greeting, complimentary closing, signature; for scoring this criterion, proper placement is ignored--see criterion below).
[Skill W4 Mfs 4200]

Good: All or most letter parts are included.

Acceptable: Some letter parts are included.

Unacceptable: Few or no letter parts are included.

Places all letter parts correctly (see parts above).
[Skill W5 Mfs 5200]

Good: All or most letter parts are placed correctly.

Acceptable: Some letter parts are placed correctly.

Unacceptable: Few or no letter parts are placed correctly.

Comment: This criterion is not scored if no letter parts are included.

FORM:

Uses correct grammar and complete sentences. [Skills Lu 1000, 2000, 3000, 4000, 6000, 7000, 8000, 9000; Lgk 4000 and 5000; Lsp 1000]

Good: The letter has few or no grammatical errors, and all sentences are complete.

Acceptable: The letter has some grammatical errors, and most sentences are complete.

Unacceptable: The letter has many grammatical errors, and many sentences are fragments and/or run-ons.

Capitalizes correctly. [Skills Mc 1000, 4000, 5000]

Good: The letter has few or no capitalization errors.

Acceptable: The letter has some capitalization errors.

Unacceptable: The letter has many capitalization errors.

Punctuates correctly. [Skills Mp 1000, 4100, 6200]

Good: The letter has few or no punctuation errors.

Acceptable: The letter has some punctuation errors.

Unacceptable: The letter has many punctuation errors.

Spells correctly. [Skills Sc 1000; Sv 1000, 2000, 3000; Sa 2000]

Good: Most words are correctly spelled.

Acceptable: Several different words are misspelled.

Unacceptable: Many different words are misspelled.

Comment: The ratings refer to "different words" because many instances of misspelling the same word should be evaluated as one misspelled word.

Writes legibly, with appropriate margins and indentation. [Skills W4 Hcf 4000; W2 Mfs 1000, 2000]

Good: The letter has few or no exceptions to the criterion.

Acceptable: The letter has some exceptions to the criterion.

Unacceptable: The letter has many exceptions to the criterion.

Skill: W4 DPpo 1000

Skill Statement

Writes a short descriptive poem.

Skill Description

The student writes a short poem that describes an entity, object, or a sensory experience. Two important verse skills may be subskills of this task at this grade level:

Skill W4 Lvs 1100: Uses verse form: couplets.

Skill W4 Lvs 2000: Uses end rhyme.

See these individual skills for their descriptions.

Other important component skills include the following descriptive-writing and diction skills:

Skill W3 Ld 1000: Uses specific rather than general terms in description.

Skill W3 Ld 3000: Uses terms that convey emotions.

Skill W3 Ld 4000: Uses sensory words.

Skill W3 GDe 2100: Elaborates for descriptive writing: includes appropriate descriptive attributes.

The following descriptive-writing skill can be (but is not necessarily) a component skill: Skill W4 Lt 2100: Uses figurative comparisons: simile.

Comment: This product skill is difficult to assess appropriately without an instructional context.

Assessment

Sample Item

Directions: Write a poem that describes the picture. The poem should also tell how the picture makes you feel.

Picture: landscape with flowers, trees, bright sun, and flying birds; butterflies are around the flowers, and one bird is obviously singing; one of the trees is a cherry tree full of ripe fruit.

Here are some of the things you may want to include in your poem:

- how the things in the picture look
- how the bird sounds when it sings
- how the flowers smell
- how the cherries on the cherry tree taste

Be sure your poem

- has good describing language, and
- has lines that rhyme.

Item Description

The stimulus is a picture of a landscape. Using verse skills and descriptive-writing skills, the student writes a poem about the picture. The stimulus involves a number of objects that are conducive to sensory description; this variety provides the student more opportunity to create rhymes for those things that are amenable to rhyme within the idiosyncratic experience of the student.

Scoring Key

Scoring Criteria	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
CONTENT:			
Describes pictured entities.	___	___	___
Uses sensory language.	___	___	___
Uses terms that convey emotions.	___	___	___
Uses specific descriptors.	___	___	___
Uses end rhyme.	___	___	___
Shows originality/ creativity.	___	___	

Comment: No space is provided for evaluating originality/ creativity as "unacceptable" because this rating would unfairly assess beyond learned skills. However, this criterion is included to "reward" imagination.

FORM:			
Uses correct grammar.	___	___	___

W4 DPpo 1000 (continued)

Scoring Criteria	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Spells correctly.	___	___	___
Writes legibly.	___	___	___

Comment: Punctuation and capitalization are not evaluated because these skills are less rule bound in poetry, and any applicable rules are too advanced for this grade level.

Scoring Guide

CONTENT:

Describes pictured entities (i.e., flowers, trees, cherries on cherry tree, sun, flying birds, singing bird, butterflies). [Skill W3 GDe 2100]

Good: Many (or all) of the pictured entities are included.

Acceptable: Two or three pictured entities are included.

Unacceptable: One or no pictured entity is included.

Uses sensory language. [Skill W3 Ld 4000]

Good: Terms for several senses are used.

Acceptable: Terms for one or two senses are used.

Unacceptable: Senses are not described.

Uses terms that convey emotions. [Skill W3 Ld 3000]

Good: Several terms are used to convey emotions.

Acceptable: A few terms are used to convey emotions.

Unaccaptable: No terms are used to convey emotion.

Uses specific descriptors (e.g., sweet rather than good to describe taste of cherries). [Skill W3 Ld 1000]

Good: Some specific descriptors are used.

Acceptable: General descriptors are used throughout.

Unacceptable: Entities are not described.

Uses end rhyme. [Skills W4 Lvs 1100 and 2000]

Good: Many or all lines rhyme.

Acceptable: A few lines rhyme.

Unacceptable: No lines rhyme.

Show originality/creativity.

Good: Style, form, content distinguish the poem from other students' poems.

Acceptable: The poem is similar to other students' poems.

Comment: No skill numbers are listed for originality/creativity because this feature is not the result of any specific skills. Thus no criterion for rating a sample as "unacceptable" is provided because this criterion would unfairly assess beyond learned skills.

FORM:

Uses correct grammar. [Skills W4 Lu 4100; W3 Lu 7100]

Good: The poem has few or no grammatical errors.

Acceptable: The poem has some grammatical errors.

Unacceptable: The poem has many grammatical errors.

Spells correctly. [Skills Sc 1110, 1310, 1320, 2000, and 3000; Sv 1100, 1200, 1300, 2100, 2200, 3100, 4100, 4200; Sm 1000]

Good: Most words are correctly spelled.

Acceptable: Several different words are misspelled.

Unacceptable: Many different words are misspelled.

Comment: The ratings refer to "different words" because many instances of misspelling the same word should be evaluated as one misspelled word.

Writes legibly. [Skill W4 Hcf 4000]

Good: All words are readable.

Acceptable: Most words are readable, and unreadable words do not interfere with comprehension of the poem.

Unacceptable: The poem is difficult or impossible to read.

Skill: W5 DPpo 2000

Skill Statement

Writes a short narrative poem.

Skill Description

The student writes a short poem that tells a story. The following are component verse and narrative-writing skills of this product-writing task at this grade level.

Skill W4 Lvs 2000: Uses end rhyme.

Skill W5 Lvs 1200: Uses verse form: stanza.

Skill W5 Lvs 4000: Uses rhythm.

Skill W4 GDe 2220: Elaborates for narrative writing: includes events appropriate for a climactic narrative.

Skill W2 GDpo 4000: Uses chronological order.

See these individual skills for their descriptions. The following skills may be (but are not necessarily) component skills used to complete this product: Uses figurative comparison: simile (Skill W4 Lt 2100) and metaphor (Skill W5 Lt 2200).

Comment: This product skill is difficult to assess appropriately without an instructional context.

Assessment

Sample Item

Directions: Write a story poem about one of these story ideas:

- A girl or boy and an animal such as a horse

OR

- An exciting football or baseball game

OR

- A magic lamp that makes wishes come true

Write at least three stanzas, or verses, so that your poem has a beginning, middle, and an ending. The stanzas should be either four or six lines long. In your story poem

- have two or more things happen,
- have these things lead to an exciting ending of the poem,

W5 DPpo 2000 (continued)

- give your poem a title.

Be sure your poem

- has lines that rhyme, and
- has rhythm.

Item Description

The stimulus consists of three optional story ideas. Using verse skills and narrative-writing skills, the student writes a narrative poem about one of the story ideas.

The three story ideas are varied enough to cover the interests and imagination of most students. A single story idea cannot be used for all students because this limitation would impose too much structure on the task; too much structure can be an impediment to the expression of the creativity expected for poetry writing.

Scoring Key

Scoring Criteria	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
CONTENT:			
Writes an appropriate title.	___	___	___
Includes two or more appropriate events.	___	___	___
Arranges events in chronological order.	___	___	___
Uses stanzas.	___	___	___
Uses rhythm.	___	___	___
Uses end rhyme.	___	___	___
Shows originality/ creativity.	___	___	

Comment: No space is provided for evaluating originality/ creativity as "unacceptable" because this rating would unfairly assess beyond learned skills. However, this criterion is included to "reward" imagination.

Scoring Criteria	Good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
FORM:			
Uses correct grammar.	___	___	___
Spells correctly.	___	___	___
Writes legibly.	___	___	___

Comment: Capitalization and punctuation are not evaluated because these skills are less rule bound in poetry, and any applicable rules are too advanced for this grade level.

Scoring Guide

CONTENT:

Writes an appropriate title. [Skill W3 GDe 1200]

Good: The title is appropriate and original.

Acceptable: The title is appropriate, but not original (e.g., "The Animal," "The Game," "The Lamp").

Unacceptable: The title is not relevant or is not included.

Includes two or more events. [Skill W4 GDe 2220]

Good: Two significant events or three or more events of less significance are included.

Acceptable: Only one significant event or two insignificant events are included.

Unacceptable: One insignificant event or no events are included.

Arranges events in chronological order. [Skill W2 GDpo 4000]

Good: All or most events are arranged in an order that leads to a climax.

Acceptable: Some events are arranged in an order that leads to a climax.

Unacceptable: No chronological ordering is evident.

Uses stanzas. [Skill W5 Lvs 1200]

Good: Three or more stanzas are included.

Acceptable: Two stanzas are included.

Unacceptable: No stanza division is evident.

Uses rhythm. [Skill W5 Lvs 4000]

Good: Some rhythm is evident.

Acceptable: Rhythm is not readily perceived, but the lines flow and are not abrasive in stressed-unstressed sequence.

Unacceptable: Lines are abrasive and read like rough prose.

Uses end rhyme. [Skill W4 Lvs 2000]

Good: Many or all lines rhyme.

Acceptable: A few lines rhyme.

Unacceptable: No lines rhyme.

Shows originality/creativity.

Good: Style, form, content distinguish the poem from other students' poems.

Acceptable: The poem is similar to other students' poems.

Comment: No skill numbers are listed for originality/creativity because this feature is not the result of any specific skills. Thus no criterion for rating a sample as "unacceptable" is provided because this criterion would unfairly assess beyond learned skills.

FORM:

Uses correct grammar. [Skills W4 Lu 4100, 4200; W3 Lu 7100, W5 Lu 7200; W5 Lu 8000, 9000]

Good: The poem has few or no grammatical errors.

Acceptable: The poem has some grammatical errors.

Unacceptable: The poem has many grammatical errors.

Spells correctly. [Skills Sc 1000, 2000, 3000; Sv 1100, 1200, 1300, 2000, 3100, 4000; Sm 1000]

Good: Most words are correctly spelled.

Acceptable: Several different words are misspelled.

Unacceptable: Many different words are misspelled.

W5 DPpo 2000 (continued)

Comment: The acceptable and unacceptable ratings for the "Spells correctly" criterion refer to "different "words" because many instances of misspelling the same word should be evaluated as one misspelled word.

Writes legibly. [Skill W4 Hcf 4000]

Good:	All words are readable.
Acceptable:	Most words are readable, and unreadable words do not interfere with comprehension of the poem.
Unacceptable:	The poem is difficult or impossible to read.

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